

# Inspection of St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Barnsley

Stocks Lane, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S75 2DF

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Inspection dates: 7 and 8 February 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The executive headteacher of this school is Lee Spencer. This school is part of St Mary's Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the acting chief executive officer, Tamara Gulliver, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Tracy Rodger.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

This is a school where staff and pupils glow with pride. Staff greet pupils in the playground in the morning. This positive welcome sets pupils up for a day of learning and discovery. Pupils are exceptionally kind and caring towards each other. They have excellent relationships with their teachers and staff.

Enjoyment and inclusion are at the heart of this school. Leaders ensure all pupils study a broad and ambitious curriculum designed to meet the needs of all pupils. They learn new knowledge with enthusiasm and determination. Pupils make good progress from their starting points. In the early years, children experience an exciting day of exploration and activity.

Parents and carers appreciate the high level of care and support given to pupils and their families, especially pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils receive timely and precise support.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are proud of their leadership roles in school. Pupils are consistently encouraging towards each other. They learn to manage their own behaviour exceptionally well. Pupils say that they love coming to school. One pupil said, 'I want my children to come to this school in the future; it is that good.'

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Leaders, in partnership with colleagues from the trust, have created a curriculum that is ambitious and bespoke for all pupils. It is taught consistently well across the school because teachers know what to teach and when to teach it. Pupils make good progress and enjoy the challenge that every day offers as they learn.

In the early years, detailed planning and a learning environment that is carefully adapted to meet the needs of young children help teachers ensure that children get off to a good start to school. This means that pupils are ready for Year 1.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. In Reception and Year 1, pupils benefit from a well-structured approach to teaching phonics. Staff are highly skilled and teaching is focused and precise. Pupils learn sounds quickly. They confidently read books matched to the sounds that they are learning. Pupils who find reading difficult are identified and given carefully planned support. This helps them catch-up quickly. Older pupils talk with enthusiasm and confidence about reading. They share their thoughts on the stories and characters in the books they read. Pupils and staff love to read. They read together in all classes. Pupils know that reading is an important skill.

Pupils show a deep understanding of learning across the curriculum. In mathematics, pupils use division and multiplication to solve problems. In history, pupils talk with confidence about the Great Fire of London and the end of the

Roman Empire. In art, pupils learn skills and study the work of great artists. They produce high-quality pieces of work, using techniques such as batik.

Teachers are knowledgeable. They use the detailed curriculum to plan learning that builds well over time. In lessons, pupils revisit prior learning to help them remember important knowledge. Sometimes, in some subjects, opportunities are not taken to allow pupils to develop higher-level thinking, make connections and reason.

In all subjects, teachers use ongoing assessment and feedback effectively to address pupils' misconceptions. However, in a few subjects, assessment at the end of a sequence of learning is not as well used. This means that teachers are not always aware of what pupils have learned over time or identified any gaps in their learning.

Every child is seen as unique. Staff are clear about individual pupil's specific needs. Barriers to success are reduced or removed. Pupils with SEND have clear support plans to ensure that targets are known by staff. They are helped to learn successfully.

The school provides an environment in which pupils can flourish. Personal development is deeply rooted in the culture of the school. Pupils model tolerance and respect, and seize every opportunity to be a leader. The collective worship council run assemblies linked to fundamental British values and protected characteristics. Pupils are articulate when discussing the importance of family and values such as democracy. They are able to make links between ideas like individual liberty and the rule of law and have an excellent knowledge of different faiths and cultures. Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for life in modern Britain.

The school works hard to build on their good relationships with the local community. Parents appreciate the work of the school. One parent said, 'We love this school and all the staff who work very hard to provide a secure, safe environment for children to thrive.'

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Daily ongoing assessment is strong, however assessments at the end of a sequence of learning are not used as effectively as they could be in all subject areas. As a result, in some subjects, teachers are unable to clearly establish what pupils have learned over time and where any gaps remain. The school should continue to develop summative assessment to support teachers when planning lessons to meet the differing needs of pupils.

- In some subjects, the development of pupils' reasoning and problem-solving is not as secure as their learning of key facts. The school should continue to develop ways that pupils can reason, use and apply their knowledge in all subjects.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137870
<b>Local authority</b>	Barnsley
<b>Inspection number</b>	10315567
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	217
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Tracy Rodger
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Tamara Gulliver (Acting CEO of the trust)
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lee Spencer
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stmarysacademytrust.co.uk">http://www.stmarysacademytrust.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	19 and 20 February 2013, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of St Mary's Academy Trust.
- The school has a breakfast and after-school club on site.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other members of the leadership team.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the board of trustees, the governing body, the chief executive officer of the trust, the chief education officer of the trust and the diocese education adviser.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, art and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, conducted joint lesson visits with leaders, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms, around the school and at playtime and lunchtime. They spoke with pupils about their views of the school and their learning, behaviour and safety.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff and pupils, and Ofsted's online survey for parents, Parent View. This included comments received via the free-text facility. Inspectors also talked to some parents at the beginning of the school day.

## **Inspection team**

Chris Jennings, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jonathan Sharp

Ofsted Inspector

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